

# History of Shiloh Baptist Church

YORKTOWN, VIRGINIA

## Part I — Old Shiloh

During the years when President Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation and while the Civil War was being fought Shiloh Baptist Church was organized.

The members of Shiloh were then slaves, not only in Yorktown but in neighboring communities and nearby counties, who had come to Yorktown after learning of the evacuation, eager and anxious to have a building of their own in which to worship.

Reverend John Carey, a former slave and a resident of Yorktown at that time, also wanted a church for his people. He knew Reverend Jeremiah Asher of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania who was a chaplain in the Union Army and also pastor of Shiloh Baptist church in Philadelphia.

Reverend Carey sent for Reverend Asher who came to Yorktown; and after much consultation and debate, a church was organized and set apart in 1863.

The church was named Shiloh for Reverend Asher's church in Philadelphia. Reverend John Carey was elected and served as the pastor of the church. Reverend Asher was a devoted friend of Reverend Carey.

Shiloh's building has not always had its present site. It has had three locations. The first building was a log church covered with straight up and down boards. This little building was owned by the government.

At some times, some Quaker women from the north taught the three R's there to the slaves — both children and adults who wanted to learn.

This church was located in the little settlement in back of the United States National Cemetery at Yorktown known as "Slabtown" and now "Uniontown."

In 1893, the church changed location and a church was built across from the National Cemetery on what is now Route 704. In 1897, this church was destroyed by fire, and in 1898, the cornerstone was laid, and the present Old Shiloh Church was erected.

The cost of the construction of the church was in excess of \$9,000 which, at that time, seemed a staggering amount.

The building was used 76 years and in 1971 was acquired by the National Park Service.

The site will become a part of the National Colonial Historic Park. The Federal Government paid the congregation \$17,000 in cash and gave 3.4 acres of land at the intersection of Route 17 and Goosley Road.

The architectural design of the Old Shiloh was quite different from that of most churches of that period, and every day was admired by visitors to Yorktown.

The Old Shiloh will be torn down in a program to preserve the Yorktown battlefield scene much as it was during the siege at Yorktown. Excavation work has been going on for sometime on property across the street from the church to uncover the trenches and redoubts connected with the Grand French Battery.

Mention must be made of Shiloh's Centennial:

Activities — "A Proud Heritage" 1863-1963

Past Events:

A Review of Centennial Events — 1963

Sunday, March 10  
Education Day  
Thomas E. Hawkins, Dean of Men  
Hampton Institute, Speaker

Sunday, April 14  
Civil Day  
The Honorable Thomas N. Downing  
House of Representatives, Speaker

Sunday, May 12  
Interdenominational and Inter-Racial Day  
Dr. Elmer N. Hassell, Pastor  
Trinity Methodist Church, Poquoson, Speaker

Sunday, June 16  
Fraternal Day  
The Reverend Dr. S. S. Sutton, Pastor  
Zion Baptist Church  
Newport News, Virginia, Speaker

Sunday, July 14  
An Appreciation Service  
In honor of Professor  
Charles E. Brown

Sunday, July 24 — 21st Homecoming Day  
The Reverend Dr. Harvey N. Johnson  
Pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church  
Portsmouth, Speaker

July 22-26  
Revival Service  
Conducted by Reverend John F. Williams  
Messiah Baptist Church

## ONE HUNDRED YEARS

### Shiloh's One Hundredth Anniversary Services

Sunday, October 6  
Reverend Fred Boddie, Jr., Pastor  
First Baptist Church  
Newport News, Virginia Speaker

Tuesday, October 8  
Community Night  
Reverend B. W. Morrison, D.D., Pastor  
Galton Baptist Church, Speaker

Wednesday, October 9  
Reverend A. P. Godwin, Pastor  
Emanuel Baptist Church

Thursday, October 10  
Reverend S. W. Williams, Pastor  
St. Paul A.M.E. Church

Friday, October 11  
Reverend I. G. Gladden, Pastor  
Wine Street Baptist Church

Sunday, October 20  
Anniversary Sermon  
Reverend Dr. J. B. Reld, Pastor  
Shalom Baptist Church

Sunday, October 27, 12:45 p.m.  
Centennial Communion

Sunday, October 27, 3 p.m.  
Reflections, Memorial and Appreciation Service  
Reverend Dr. G. S. Russell, Pastor  
Queen Street Baptist Church

Thursday, October 31  
Centennial Banquet

Shiloh has had 14 pastors during 100 years. They are as follows:

Reverend John Carey  
Reverend Richard Smith  
Reverend Thomas Harding  
Reverend Percy J. Wallace  
Reverend John Lavelle  
Reverend F. H. Ashby  
Reverend G. D. Pickney

Reverend W. A. Baker  
Reverend J. H. Burnham  
Reverend I. H. Coleman  
Reverend M. E. Cheeks  
Reverend S. E. Pugh  
Reverend W. J. Beckelt, Jr.  
Reverend Joseph H. Williams

God did bless each one. He gave them strength, vision, and courage to carry on as outstanding leaders.

In 1964, the pastoral mantle fell on the shoulders of Reverend Richard Holmes, Shiloh's 15th pastor who is our present pastor.

May God continue to give him strength, vision and courage to carry on as an outstanding Christian leader.

## Part II

After a century of ownership, the historic property on which the second Shiloh stood was transferred to the National Park Service. The Federal Government paid the congregation \$17,000 in cash and 3.4 acres of land at the intersection of Goosley Road and Route 17 and on this site the new Shiloh Baptist Church was constructed.

The Ground Breaking Ceremony was held by the pastor and members on the site for the new church December 18, 1971.

The first spadeful of soil was turned over by Mrs. Maggie Callis, the Mother of the Church and her grandson, Cyrus Edlow, who was at that time the youngest member of the church. The ceremony was conducted by the Rev. Richard Holmes, pastor of the church.

assisted by the Rev. Joe Taylor, who offered the dedicatory prayer. Appropriate hymns were sung by the assembled congregation. The deacons and trustees of the church also participated in the ceremony.

Work on the new edifice began.

Cornerstone laying was held July 29, 1973. Appropriate ceremonies were conducted by the pastor, officers, members, and the contractor, Mr. Richardson.

A modern structure with all the latest conveniences has been completed at a total cost of \$175,000 by contractor, Charlie Richardson, Jr. of Hampton, Virginia. Ronald H. Muse, one of Shiloh's own sons, was very influential in designing the new building.

The stained-glass windows from old Shiloh valued at \$20,000 were retained and placed in the new church building.

The sanctuary is steam-heated and air conditioned throughout.

The building consists of a sanctuary, fellowship hall, Pastor's study, office, deacons' room, choir rooms, baptistry, classrooms, and appropriate restrooms.

The new structure was dedicated on the fourth Sunday, December 23, 1973 — 3 p.m.

After the morning service at the old Shiloh, the entire congregation marched from the old edifice to its new church at the intersection of Goosley Road and George Washington Highway for the dedication service.

Prior to the dedication service and the entering of the congregation into the new sanctuary the ribbon was cut. This was done by two of Shiloh's loyal members, Mrs. Margaret Wells Burke and Charles E. Brown, an 85 year old citizen of York County and Chairman of the trustee board.

The Rev. W. J. Beckett, a former pastor of the Shiloh Baptist Church, preached the dedication sermon. Music for the occasion was furnished by the combined choirs and singing groups of the church.

God has blessed us and the members are keenly aware of his blessings. As in the old Shiloh, we are dedicated to the call and cause of our church.

Shiloh is proud of its heritage. We are humble and grateful to the many friends who have supported us spiritually and financially.

To aid in the spiritual advancement and the material improvements, there are along with the pastor and official board several auxiliaries or departments which function very smoothly and effectively. Among these are the Sunday School or Church School which meets every Sunday at 10:00 a.m., the Senior Choir, Second Senior Choir, Junior Choir and Gospel Train, Senior and Junior Usher Boards, the Youth Council, the Altar Guild, whose main function is to see that the altar, pulpit, and those things pertaining to the same are kept in the most tasteful and respectable conditions, the Missionary Society, The Lula A. Norton Memorial Society, The Pastor's Aide, Bible Study Group, and Deaconess Board.

All of these are active departments, and add much to the spiritual atmosphere of the church. The one aspect which stands out most prominently in the church is the warm-hearted Christian Fellowship. This, we pray, will continue, throughout the life of Shiloh.

It is our prayer that God may "Teach us to use wisely the blessings he has bestowed upon us. May prosperity not enfeeble our spirit nor harden our hearts. May it never master us as to dull our desire for life's higher ideals. And should adversity come, may it not embitter us nor cause us to despair, but may we accept it as a mark of his chastening love which purifies and strengthens. Let every obstacle become an incentive to greater effort, and let every defeat teach us anew the lesson of patience and perseverance."

As Shiloh enters a new era may we ever put God and his Kingdom first.

And finally may we reflect on the words of the master "Unless the Lord buildeth the house they labor in vain."

## Message from The Pastor



Rev. Richard Holmes

Greetings to all who have assembled here to witness this occasion of great solemnity and of notable church history. It is with rejoicing and giving of praise to God that we have come another milestone during the one hundred eleventh anniversary of Shiloh Baptist Church. We appreciate everyone's deep concern in the church and for the cause for which it stands in the community. To all of you we express our sincere commendation for helping in any way to make our one hundred eleventh church anniversary a success.

In retrospection of the long existence of Shiloh, we thank the Lord for making us ever conscious of Thy Kingdom and the inspiration and the fellowship we enjoy therein. We remember with love the nurture Shiloh set for our growing strength, the influence that Shiloh gave to the devoted hearts, and the steadfast power for good that Shiloh exerted to all. For we rejoice with thanksgiving in knowing that there is none like the firm foundation of the church. In the words of Corinthians 3:11, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus." We should never lose sight of this tremendous truth that Christ is the foundation, its chief cornerstone, and the head of our endeavors.

In contemplation of this memorable occasion, we proudly realize how challenging is the rich heritage left us as Shiloh stands on the threshold of a new era. Today, we should rejoice in happiness to be the stewards who are trustees of this glorious heritage and we ought to be in the vanguard of any worthwhile movements endeavoring to meet the needs of all of our church and the community.

Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without faltering. Let us in unity, in prayer, and in continuing sacrifice dedicate ourselves to greater service to God and to His Kingdom building.

## Our Pastor and His Family



Reverend Richard J. Holmes has been pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church, Yorktown, Virginia since 1965.

Richard John Holmes was born in Farmville, Virginia, December 5, 1931; son of Reverend Joseph T. Holmes and Mrs. Ida Holmes.

He attended the local public schools of Lynchburg, Virginia and of Tennessee. He graduated from Nelson Merry High School in Jefferson City, Tennessee in 1950. Reverend Holmes served in the army of the United States of America from June 6, 1950 to June 5, 1953. After his discharge from the army, he attended Morristown College and later, Knoxville College in Tennessee.

Upon coming to Virginia, he became a member of the Rising Sun Baptist Church, of Lackey, where he participated in the choir, Sunday School, and the Baptist Training Union. It was at this time that he felt the call of God to preach. He was licensed to preach by the Rising Sun Baptist Church, Lackey, Virginia, which was then pastored by Reverend Frank A. Rylander.

He was ordained to the full work of ministry December 9, 1963 and he became an assistant to Reverend Joseph H. Williams, pastor of the Shiloh Baptist Church, Yorktown, Virginia.

His first pastorate was the Shiloh Baptist Church, Yorktown, Virginia, where he is currently pastoring. He also accepted pastorage of the First Morning Star Baptist Church, Gloucester, Virginia, where he served from 1966-68.

Reverend Holmes is affiliated with the Baptist Minister's Lay Forum of which he serves as its treasurer, the Tidewater Peninsula Baptist Association, and the Sunday School Convention of the Tidewater Peninsula Baptist Association. He is now one of its past vice presidents. He has also served on several advisory committees representing the York County School System.

Besides pastoring Shiloh, Reverend Holmes, at one time, was employed by the Naval Weapons Station, Yorktown, Virginia. He is currently employed as an administrative clerk by the National Park Service, Yorktown, Virginia.

He is married to the former Miss Margaret E. Johnson. God blessed them with three children, Merna, Roselyn and Richard, Jr.

In coming this far by faith, Reverend Holmes along with his family has had a vision of "New Shiloh" and has worked towards that end. His devoted and untiring service to us, with us, and for us has led us into many achievements. He has faced his responsibilities with faith, courage, and determination. His passing on of these attributes to his people has been a force behind Shiloh's men, women, and children and of whose deeds are fulfilling the pages of our heritage.

His years of dedicated service have won for him a place of respect and high esteem in the hearts of his people.

We pray that our pastor, Reverend Richard J. Holmes, and his family continue to illuminate the cause for which the church stands.

## A Message from the Assistant Pastor . . .

"Thy word have I hid in mine heart that I might not sin against Thee."  
(Psalm 119:11)

The writer of Psalm 119 felt that it was utterly impossible to overemphasize the importance of the word of God. It contains the priceless formula for living in accordance with the eternal will of God.

The Psalmist is definite and to the point in the confession he made that God's word is hidden in his heart and controls his life. His whole being, from center to circumference, is dominated by God's word. If the word dwells richly in the heart, it controls the life; for, "out of the heart are the issues of life."

There is a good reason for hiding God's word in the heart. The Psalm writer says it is so that "I might not sin against thee." What a protection the word of God is against sin! When Satan visited our Lord in the wilderness, he cast temptations before the Master. At this time, Jesus was humanly speaking, weakest and most subjected to temptation. He turned the advances of Satan away by using the word of God and saying, "It is written, thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." I say that you can do the same, if you hide God's word in your heart. Let us keep God's word in our hearts.



## Our Assistant Pastor Rev. William G. Marshall and Family

William G. Marshall was born in Yorktown, Virginia, March 7, 1912, to Deacon and Mrs. William H. Marshall. He joined the Shiloh Baptist Church at the age of twelve. Later he served as the Superintendent of the Church School. He graduated from the York County Training School in Yorktown, Virginia and attended Virginia State College Trade School in Petersburg, Virginia.

Rev. Marshall married the former Miss Dorothy A. Anderson, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. H. Anderson, in the Rising Sun Baptist Church, Lackey, Virginia, on May 16, 1937. God blessed Rev. and Mrs. Marshall with four lovely children — Ralph G., Mary E., Dorothy O., and William G., Jr.

At the age of twenty-five, Rev. Marshall served as a deacon of Shiloh Baptist Church. In 1972, he was called by God to preach the Gospel and on the sixth of August of the same year he was licensed to preach the gospel and to exercise his gift in the work of the ministry.

On the nineteenth of August, 1973, Rev. Marshall was solemnly and publicly set apart and ordained to the work of the Gospel Ministry. He is now serving as the assistant pastor of the Shiloh Baptist Church.



## The Historic Ceremonies Held For The "New" Shiloh Baptist Church

### Ground-Breaking Ceremonies



### Cornerstone Laying Ceremonies



## Reflections

**CHARLES E. BROWN**  
Chairman of Trustee Board  
Superintendent of Shiloh Sunday School  
Over 50 years member of Shiloh



Whenever I think of Shiloh Baptist Church, my mind does not dwell too long upon the Church building, but rather upon the old heralds of the Cross, who came out of 256 years of cruel slavery when president Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation January, 1863, and established the Shiloh Baptist Church. It is true that there have been several buildings beginning with the little slab board building in what, at that time was called Slabtown, and now known as Uniontown, up to the construction of our present modern edifice where we worship today October, 1974 celebrating our 111th anniversary.

Our faithful early historian, the late Miss Lee Bertie Norton, and our present historian, Mrs. Musetta White, have faithfully recorded in detail our record of growth and progress.

I shall simply give in summary a brief sketch of recent important events.

In 1971, The Colonial National Park Service purchased the Old Shiloh Church site to become a part of Yorktown Colonial Historical Park, and in exchange gave us 3.4 acres of land upon which our present church is built — at the intersection of Goosley Road and State highway 17. A young member of the church, Mr. Ronald Muse, who has had training in construction planning presented to the church several sketches of a proposed new structure. The church finally accepted one of his plans and employed an architect to put the plan into blueprint form and write the detailed construction.

The trustees requested and received bids from several construction contractors, and finally accepted the bid submitted by Mr. Charlie Richardson of Hempton, Virginia.

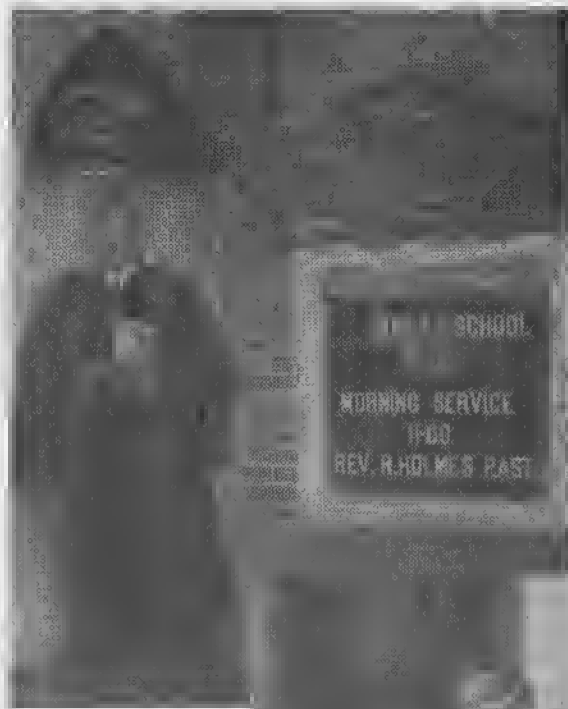
A ground breaking ceremony was held in December, 1971, and the first shovel of earth was removed by deaconess Sister Maggie Califs, the Church mother, assisted by the pastor, Reverend Richard Holmes, the trustees, and deacons. The trustees secured the services of Mr. Patrick Holmes to clear the church site and grade the area. A very impressive cornerstone laying was held.

On the fourth Sunday in December, 1973, the church was dedicated with an appropriate appreciative service, which was attended by a large number of friends and several county officials. The congregation met for the last time in Old Shiloh, and marched in a solid body to the new church edifice.

The several departments of the church are wide awake and operating to the Glory of God and the benefit of mankind. At Shiloh, we give thanks to God for having provided Shiloh with dedicated Christian leadership and recognizing the responsibilities which fall upon us. We realize that we must continue to uphold and pass on to others the noble heritage bestowed by our fore parents.

In Luke 12:48, we find these words — "To him whom much is given, of him much is required." God has wonderfully blessed Shiloh. Therefore, God requires much of Shiloh.

## The End — The Beginning



Pastor and Congregation worshipping for the last time in "Old Shiloh".

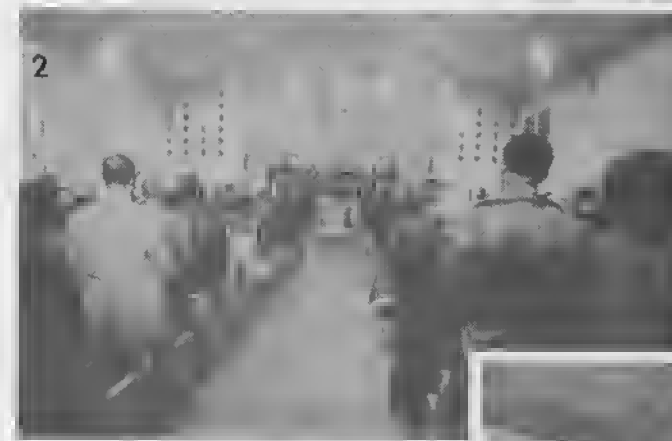


Pastor and Congregation marching together in a solid body to the "New Shiloh".

## DEDICATION SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS

December 23, 1973

1 — The Sanctuary — "Let us go into the house of the Lord."



2 — Clergymen and congregation lifting their voices in the hymn of praise.

3 — Following the clergyman in the procession are deacons, trustees, and contractors, Mr. Charlie Richardson.



4 — Two loyal members of Shiloh Baptist Church performing the ribbon cutting ceremony prior to the dedication service and the entering of the congregation into the new sanctuary.



5 — Clergymen: Rev. W. J. Beckett, Jr., former pastor of Shiloh; Rev. Richard J. Holmes, pastor of Shiloh Baptist Church; and Rev. William G. Marshall, assistant pastor of Shiloh, leading the procession.

6 — Pastor, Rev. Richard Holmes welcoming the congregation on this glorious occasion. Seated with guests is Mrs. Eleanor Myers, chairman of the church dedication committee.

